

AMENDMENTS TO DRAWING FIGURES

Please replace the original sheet including FIG. 3 with the enclosed replacement drawing sheet including Figs. 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d.

REMARKS

Claims 2-16 remain in the application. Claim 1 is hereby canceled without prejudice. Claims 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 14 are hereby amended. No new matter is being added.

Drawings

In accordance with the Examiner's recommendation, applicant hereby amends Fig. 3 so as to label the multiple figures therein as Fig. 3a, Fig. 3b, Fig. 3c, and Fig. 3d. Corresponding amendments are made to the specification. Applicants respectfully submit that the corrected drawing now overcomes this objection.

35 USC 101

Original claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 USC 101 as lacking a "useful, concrete and tangible result." In accordance with the Examiner's recommendation, applicants have hereby amended the claims so as to now recite "A method of video encoding or decoding" in the independent method claims and "An apparatus for video encoding or decoding ..." in the independent apparatus claim. Video encoding provides the useful, concrete and tangible result of providing an encoded video stream which may be digitally transmitted or stored. Similarly, video decoding provides the useful, concrete and tangible result of decoding the encoded video stream. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that, with aforementioned amendments, this rejection is now overcome.

35 USC 112, second paragraph

Original claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting an essential method step, such omission

amounting to a gap between the steps. Applicants have hereby amended the independent claims in accordance with the Examiner's recommendation to correct the omission identified by the Examiner.

All the pending independent claims are hereby amended so as to correct the omission identified by the Examiner. In particular, claims 2, 4 and 8 (now independent) are hereby amended so as to recite "merging said corresponding pair of segments to create one supersegment if said smallest error statistic is less than the threshold value" (Emphasis added.) Similarly, claims 6 and 13 (now independent) are hereby amended so as to recite "merging said corresponding pair of segments to create one supersegment if said smallest error statistic is sufficiently small to merit said merging" (Emphasis added.) Finally, claim 14 (also independent) is hereby amended so as to recite "means to merge said corresponding pair of segments to create one supersegment if said smallest error statistic is sufficiently small to merit said merging...." (Emphasis added.)

Original claims 3, 5, and 10 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have hereby amended the claims to correct the indefiniteness identified by the Examiner.

In particular, for claim 3, insufficient antecedent basis was identified by the Examiner in regards to "the threshold value" and "the total boundary length". Amended claim 3 depends from independent claim 2. Claim 2 is hereby amended so as to recite "a threshold value" and so provide antecedent basis for "the threshold value." Claim 2 is also hereby amended so as to recite "a total boundary length of the candidate segment" and so provide antecedent basis for "the total boundary length of the candidate segment."

For claim 5, insufficient antecedent basis was identified by the Examiner in regards to "the threshold value" and "the size". Amended claim 5 depends from independent claim 2. Claim 2 is hereby amended so as to recite "a threshold value" and so provide antecedent basis for "the threshold value." Claim 5 is hereby amended so as to recite "the area of the candidate segment" (which has antecedent basis in claim 2) instead of "the size of the candidate segment."

For claim 10, insufficient antecedent basis was identified by the Examiner in regards to “the merging parameters”. Amended claim 10 depends from independent claim 2. Claim 10 is hereby amended so as to recite “said error statistic is calculated” (which has antecedent basis in claim 2), instead of “one or more of the merging parameters are calculated”.

Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is now overcome.

Allowable Subject Matter

Original claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 13 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and so as to overcome the aforementioned rejections under 35 USC 101 and 112, second paragraph.

Accordingly, applicants have amended claims 2, 4, 6, 8, and 13 to be in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 1) and any intervening claims. As discussed above, these claims have also been amended so as to overcome the aforementioned rejections under 35 USC 101 and 112, second paragraph.

Claim 9 depends from independent claim 8 and so is also now in form for allowance.

Similarly, claims 3, 5, 7, 10, 11 and 12, as hereby amended, now depend from independent claim 2. Hence, claims 3, 5, 7, 10, 11 and 12 are also now in form for allowance.

Apparatus claim 14 is hereby amended so as to incorporate the allowable limitations from claim 2. Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that claim 14 is now also allowable.

Claims 15-16 depend from amended claim 14. Hence, applicants respectfully submit that claims 15-16 are also allowable.

Conclusion

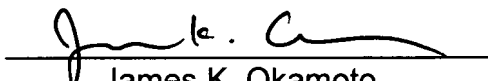
For at least the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the pending claims are now in form for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned for any questions.
Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

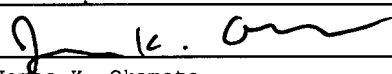
Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure(s)

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